

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 2, 2005

Hon. Michael Chertoff  
Secretary  
Department of Homeland Security  
Nebraska Avenue Complex  
3801 Nebraska Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Chertoff,

I write today to express my concern, which I am sure you share, regarding today's news reports that a suspect, arrested after the devastating Madrid train bombings last March, possessed detailed sketches of Grand Central Station in New York City. This discovery brings to the forefront questions about how safe our commuter rail systems are and just as importantly, how open our lines of communication are with other countries regarding such threatening terrorist information. In addition, the report points out that it took a startling eight months for Spanish law enforcement to turn over the sketches and notes related to Grand Central Station to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

I have several questions regarding the communication between the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI before and your counterparts in other countries and regarding this critical information. First, why did it take eight months for Spanish law enforcement officials to notify and share information relating to a terrorist threat against a target in the United States? Information vital to the safety of the more than 700,000 passengers who pass through the station everyday and the millions of New Yorkers who work and live in the area should be immediately turned over to U.S. law enforcement authorities.

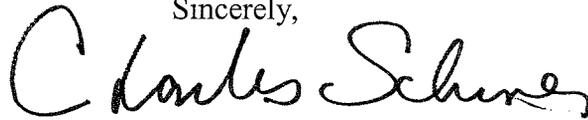
Second, when was local law enforcement notified of the possible threat and what steps were taken by your Department and by local agencies to bolster security? Local officials, including the New York Police Department and the Metropolitan Transit Authority Police, need to be told about the threat and instructed to take precautions to avert an attack. We all agree that police, firefighters, MTA workers, and other first responders should not hear about this terrorist threat on the evening news.

Third, what is the Administration doing to beef up security at our major passenger and commuter rail systems? These sketches found in Spain are another sign of the high threats facing our nation's passenger and commuter rail systems. As you know, I have strongly advocated for higher funding and more resources to protect the soft underbelly of our mass transportation systems from terrorist attacks. But I believe that since the September 11<sup>th</sup> and Madrid rail attacks, it is clear that the Administration has not devoted

the financial resources necessary to protect the millions of commuters who ride the rails every day.

I pledge to continue my efforts to secure all modes of transportation and I look forward to working with you to vastly improve the security of our commuter and passenger rail services in New York and nationwide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles E. Schumer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "C".

Charles E. Schumer  
US Senator